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ABSTRACT

This book begins with a close examination of the roots of poetic craft and concludes by exploring the writer's role in creating a sense of community that is open, inclusive, and able to bind the individual and the whole in a way that allows each full self-expression. In between, the book illuminates the nature of originality, translation, the various strategies by which meaning enfolds itself in language, poetry's roots in oral memory, and the importance of the "shadow" to good art. Delving into the nature of poetry, the book discusses the nature of the human mind, perception, and experience. It is about the underpinnings of poetic craft, but it is also about a way of being alive in the world--"alertly, musically, intelligently, passionately, permeably." The book is a primer for the general reader and a manual for the working writer, with each of the nine "gates" exploring particular strategies of language and thought that allow a poem to convey meaning and emotion with clarity and force. (NKA)

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